

ABIGAIL SPANBERGER  
7TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

September 29, 2021

Mr. Gerald Roane  
Virginia District Manager  
United States Postal Service  
1801 Brook Road  
Richmond, VA 23232

Dear Mr. Roane:

Thank you for your service as Virginia District Manager for the United States Postal Service (USPS) during these difficult times. The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly placed an immense strain on operations at the USPS, and I am grateful for the dedication of public servants like yourself working on behalf of the American people.

More than ever, Virginians rely on the USPS to deliver prescription medications, bills, groceries, and other essential items in a timely manner. Throughout this public health crisis, USPS mail carriers, sales associates, supervisors, and more have been working tirelessly – day in and day out – to carry out the USPS' mission of providing the nation with reliable, affordable, universal mail service.

The confluence of a global pandemic, extensive restructuring by USPS leadership, a nationwide election, and surges surrounding holidays has had a dramatic impact on mail service since March 2020 – and I understand these factors have caused mail slowdowns at points over the last year and a half.

Unfortunately, many constituents have recently contacted my office to report significant delays in mail delivery in the 22407 zip code serving the Spotsylvania and Fredericksburg regions. For many of them, these delays have been the worst since the pandemic began. Notably, one constituent reported having not received any mail for more than three weeks. When she did receive mail, there were only five pieces – two of which were not addressed to her. When this constituent attempted to pick up mail at her post office, she was told pick-ups had ceased.

Government liaisons at the USPS informed my office that staffing shortages have been contributing to recent delays in service. Concerningly, we were told the 22407 zip code had recently been down approximately 15 carriers from its previous staffing level of 43 carriers – a nearly 35% drop – and post offices have contacted carriers from neighboring zip codes to help complete routes.

As a Representative for the Spotsylvania region, I hope to work with you on addressing these concerning mail delays that prevent those we serve from receiving the important items they rely

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on. Additionally, I look forward to working with you on ensuring our hardworking postal workforce does not have to bear the brunt of organizational challenges and staffing insufficiencies. To understand the full scope of challenges facing the USPS in the 22407 zip code, I would like to request the following information regarding these ongoing issues:

- Please expand on the staffing shortages impacting the 22407 zip code.
  - o Please include the nature of the shortages – are they due to temporary leave, permanent leave, a combination?
- What contingency plans are currently in place to mitigate insufficient staffing levels?
  - o From your vantage point as a district manager for the Commonwealth, what additional assistance or resources could be useful to improve the contingency plans currently in place?
- Please expound upon the decision to cease mail pick-up at local offices, especially when some customers have not received mail in weeks.
- In the event of sudden staffing shortages, does the USPS have a process in place to notify customers about anticipated mail delays?
- For customers whose mail has been severely delayed, are there efforts by the USPS to expedite their deliveries?
- In addition to staffing issues, please describe any additional causes of mail delivery issues impacting the Spotsylvania region.
- Are there any additional resources that would be helpful for district managers like yourself to ensure efficient and timely mail delivery in Virginia?

During this uncertain time, Americans must be able to rely on the USPS for timely delivery of prescription medications, bills, and more. Additionally, we must ensure that USPS employees are not casualties in the absence of preparation for staff shortages. As I am sure you know, many hardworking USPS employees have already been stretched thin for months – and being expected to pick up additional delivery routes certainly cannot improve morale.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter – and for the hard work of the USPS in handling the challenges posed by this historic year and a half. I look forward to your response and please let my office know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Abigail D. Spanberger  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS